

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1                   1.       A computer-implemented method of generating an information  
2 disclosure statement comprising:

- 3                   (a) receiving a signal indicating that a user has identified an electronic  
4                   document that contains reference information to be disclosed to a patent  
5                   office, the reference information including IDS information; and  
6                   (b) associating the IDS information with an electronic information disclosure  
7                   statement.

1                   2.       The method of claim 1 wherein associating includes storing the IDS  
2 information in the electronic information disclosure statement.

1                   3.       The method of claim 1 wherein associating includes storing a plurality  
2 of pointers in the electronic information disclosure statement, and wherein each pointer  
3 corresponds to an electronic document.

4                   4.       The method of claim 3 further comprising:  
5                   receiving a second signal indicating that a patent application corresponding to  
6 the electronic information disclosure statement is being electronically filed in a patent office;  
7                   extracting the IDS information from each electronic document corresponding  
8 to the plurality of pointers; and  
9                   transmitting the IDS information from each electronic document  
10                  corresponding to the plurality of pointers to the patent office.

1                   5.       The method of claim 1 further comprising extracting IDS information  
2 from the reference information.

1                   6.       The method of claim 5 wherein the IDS information is extracted from  
2 the reference information automatically in response to the signal.

1                   7        The method of claim 1 further comprising providing a prompt to the  
2 user for generating the signal.

1                   8.       The method of claim 7 wherein the prompt comprises a field in a  
2 mouse pop-up window.

1                    9.        The method of claim 7 wherein the prompt comprises an electronic  
2 button.

1                    10.      The method of claim 7 wherein the prompt comprises a computer  
2 screen icon.

1                    11.      The method of claim 1 wherein the electronic document is downloaded  
2 from a database coupled to a computer network.

1                    12.      The method of claim 1 further comprising saving the electronic  
2 information disclosure statement in a database.

1                    13.      The method of claim 12 wherein the database is a local database  
2 coupled to a local computer network.

1                    14.      The method of claim 12 wherein the database is a remote database  
2 coupled to the internet.

1                    15.      The method of claim 1 further comprising providing access to the  
2 electronic information disclosure statement to multiple users over a network.

1                    16.      The method of claim 15 further comprising prompting the user for an  
2 access code when the user requests access to the electronic information disclosure statement,  
3 wherein when the correct code is provided by the user, the user may access the electronic  
4 information disclosure statement, and when the correct code is not provided by the user, the  
5 user may not access the electronic information disclosure statement.

1                    17.      The method of claim 1 further comprising providing the user with  
2 instructions on when an electronic document is to be disclosed to a patent office.

1                    18.      The method of claim 1 further comprising electronically transmitting  
2 the electronic information disclosure statement to a patent office.

1                    19.      The method of claim 1 further comprising:  
2 receiving a second signal indicating that a patent application corresponding to  
3 the electronic information disclosure statement is being electronically filed in a patent office;  
4 and

5 electronically transmitting the electronic information disclosure statement to  
6 the patent office contemporaneously with the patent application.

1 20. The method of claim 1 further comprising automatically generating a  
2 letter to third party in a foreign country when the electronic information disclosure statement  
3 is filed in a patent office, the letter including a portion of the IDS information in the  
4 electronic information disclosure statement.

1 21. The method of claim 1 wherein the electronic document is an  
2 electronic version of a United States Patent.

1 22. The method of claim 1 wherein the electronic document is an  
2 electronic version of a foreign patent document.

1 23. The method of claim 1 wherein the electronic document is an  
2 electronic version of a publication.

1 24. A computer system comprising:

2 (a) a computer processor;

3 (b) a computer-readable memory, coupled to said computer processor, said  
4 computer-readable memory including computer instructions to:  
5 (i) receive a signal indicating that a user has identified an electronic  
6 document that contains reference information to be disclosed to a  
7 patent office, the reference information including IDS information;  
8 and

9 (ii) associate the IDS information with an electronic information  
10 disclosure statement.

1 25. The computer system of claim 24 wherein the computer instruction to  
2 associate includes instructions to store the IDS information in the electronic information  
3 disclosure statement.

1 26. The computer system of claim 24 wherein the computer instruction to  
2 associate includes instructions to store a plurality of pointers in the electronic information  
3 disclosure statement, and wherein each pointer corresponds to an electronic document.

1                   27.     The computer system of claim 24 wherein said computer-readable  
2 memory further includes computer instructions to extract the IDS information from the  
3 reference information.

1                   28.     The computer system of claim 27 wherein the IDS information is  
2 extracted automatically with one mouse-click.

1                   29.     The computer system of claim 27 wherein the IDS information is  
2 extracted automatically by parsing the reference information.

1                   30.     The computer system of claim 27 wherein the IDS information is  
2 extracted using a pop-up menu system.

1                   31.     The computer system of claim 24 wherein said computer-readable  
2 memory further includes computer instructions to provide a prompt to the user for generating  
3 the signal.

1                   32.     The computer system of claim 24 wherein said computer-readable  
2 memory further includes computer instructions to save the electronic information disclosure  
3 statement in a database.

1                   33.     The computer system of claim 24 wherein said computer-readable  
2 memory further includes computer instructions to provide access to the electronic  
3 information disclosure statement to multiple users over a network.